

REMARKS

The Applicant respectfully requests entry of the above amendments, and consideration of the application, as amended.

The above amendment reflects a phone conversation that the Applicant's undersigned Agent held with Examiner David Reese on February 15, 2007. In this phone conversation, the Applicant's Agent and Examiner Reese discussed the Examiner's comments that appear in the last paragraph on page 11 of the above-referenced Action concerning distinctions from the prior art. Specifically, claim 1 was amended to recite that the connectors terminate after engaging the ornaments. That is, contrary to the prior art of EP 0200924, according to these aspects of the invention, the connectors end after engagement and do not engage further ornaments. This aspect of the invention is disclosed throughout the instant specification, for example, in Figures 8-12 and in Figure 34.

By the above amendment, claims 23-25 were canceled in response to the Restriction made Final in the above referenced Action. The Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of these claims, and any other claims cancelled in this proceeding, through one or more divisional applications, if desired.

By this amendment, the Applicant also amended claim 54 to incorporate the limitations of claim 68 that was deemed to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 68 was canceled, and claims 55 and 57 were canceled to be made consistent with amended claim 54. Claim 69 was amended to provide the proper pendency in view of the amendment of claim 54 and the cancellation of claim 68.

The Applicant also introduced new claims 70-81. New claims 70 and 71 were introduced to introduce the limitation that the connectors may be "bent at least 90 degrees" as discussed with Examiner Reese. This aspect of the invention is disclosed throughout the instant specification, for example, in Figures 17 and 22.

New claim 72 represents prior claim 1 with the limitations of claim 9, which was also deemed to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. New claim 73 includes the limitation that the connectors terminate, as described above, and new claims 74 and 75 include the "chain" limitations recited in, for example, claims 50 and 51.

New claim 76 is similar to amended claim 1 in that claim 76 recites that the connectors are terminated, as discussed above, but also claim 76 is not limited to ornaments having only two apertures. The Applicant submits that the arrangement recited in claim 76 again clearly distinguishes from the cited art by reciting that the connectors terminate after engagement. New claims 77-79 are dependent upon claim 76 and include the limitations of allowed claim 9 and claims 50 and 51.

New claim 80 represents prior claim 54 with the limitations of claim 68, which was also deemed to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. New claim 81 corresponds to claim 69.

The Applicant wishes to acknowledge with appreciation the assistance provided by Examiner David Reese in advancing this application to allowance.


Claims 1, 3, 4, 9, 10, 12-14, 50, 51, 54, 56, 58, 59, 63-67, and 69-81 are now pending in this application.

CONCLUSION

The Applicant believes that the above Amendment and Remarks overcome the rejections of the subject Office Action and place the application in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action on the merits of the application is requested.

If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, the Applicant's undersigned Agent invites the Examiner to telephone him at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,



John Pietrangelo
Agent for Applicant
Registration No. 39,331

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HESLIN ROTHENBERG FARLEY & MESITI, P.C.

5 Columbia Circle
Albany, New York 12203
Telephone: (518) 452-5600
Facsimile: (518) 452-5579